



DEPARTMENT OF STATE

Washington, D.C. 20520

HJC -
Let's wait for Grb Yost's
specific recommendations
on programs to be resumed
Am

April 24, 1973

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TO: AF - Mr. Newsom

FROM: AF/C - Herman J. Cohen *HJC*

SUBJECT: U.S. Policy Toward Burundi: BRIEFING MEMORANDUM

REFERENCE: Bujumbura A-31 of March 30, 1973

AF/C
WS
file

Six months after his return to Bujumbura following consultations in Washington and the decision to minimize relations with Burundi, Ambassador Yost describes the impact of our policy in the attached airgram. In summation, Yost says the following:

1. Relief programs: Voluntary agencies and other foreign observers unanimously report that relief supplies are being distributed on a non-discriminatory basis throughout Burundi. Depending on the location, the government is either assisting in the distribution or at least not hindering the work.

2. National Reconciliation: The killing has definitely stopped, and government rhetoric continuously emphasizes the importance of unity and national reconciliation. There is a clear emphasis on stabilizing the situation and preventing a recurrence of last year's events. The bureaucracy appears to be normalizing its own operations to focus on development and regular administrative problems as opposed to the almost complete preoccupation with tribal considerations in 1972.

3. GRB Awareness of International Disapproval: The U.S. policy of minimal relations has served to make the GRB aware of its unfavorable international image. This awareness has further stimulated a desire to stabilize the internal situation as an important element in Burundi's foreign relations.

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2.

4. Moderate Politicians Strengthened: Personnel changes in government in late 1972 and early 1973 have reflected a strengthening of the moderate Tutsis at the expense of the hardliners who, for the most part, are now out of office.

5. The Future: Amb. Yost feels that our policy of minimal relations has achieved its purpose to the maximum extent expected as described in items 1-4 above. In short, we have gone about as far as we can go with that policy. Aware of the USG's deep disapproval of what happened in 1972, the GRB is now making every effort to normalize bilateral relations (Terence has been removed, and his successor is now residing in Washington rather than New York). If the slow but discernible trend toward moderation of internal policies is to be encouraged, we can make a useful contribution henceforth only by responding positively to current GRB initiatives with respect to the normalization of relations.

COMMENT: Our highest policy levels have been determined to make a public statement demonstrating our revulsion at what happened in Burundi. This has been frustrated to date by the absence of a suitable opportunity. (The IBRD loan project has now slipped to September-October). The two major foreign policy reports due to appear shortly contain moderate, but clear indications of our feelings about Burundi. Perhaps after these statements have had a chance to make themselves felt, we might summarize Amb. Yost's views for the Secretary.

Enclosure: Bujumbura A-31

AF/C:WHSiefkin/HJCohen:lb
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